

Department of State

TELEGRAM

Argentine

PAGE 01
ACTION ARA-14

BUENOS 05038 081239Z

AT028

7621

7/7/77

BUENOS 05038 081239Z

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 NSC-05 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 /049 V

-----102646 082058Z /64

R 072039Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1259
INFO USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 5038

USIAC FOR ILA

STATE FOR ARA/ECA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, AR

SUBJECT: GENTE MAGAZINE INTERVIEW WITH EX AMBASSADOR HILL

POPULAR WEEKLY MAGAZINE GENTE (393,000 CIRCULATION) IN JULY 7 ISSUE SPLASHES FOUR-PAGE INTERVIEW BY ITS U.S. CORRESPONDENT ALBERTO OLIVA WITH EX AMBASSADOR TO BUENOS AIRES ROBERT C. HILL AT HIS NEW HAMPSHIRE HOME. STORY INCLUDES QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO HILL BY THE MAGAZINE BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FROM ARGENTINA. PIECE OPENS WITH FULL, TWO-PAGE PHOTO OF HILL AT HOME SITTING NEAR AUTOGRAPHED PHOTO OF PRESIDENT VIDELA. CAPTION READS "ROBERT HILL, BACK IN THE U.S., TALKS ABOUT ARGENTINA WITH ADMIRATION. HE HAS MANY MEMENTOS, AMONG THEM AN AUTOGRAPHED PHOTOGRAPH OF PRESIDENT VIDELA. HIS SONS WILL REMAIN HERE TO LIVE."

INTRODUCTORY QUOTE SAID "I AM AS ARGENTINE AND LOVE YOUR COUNTRY AS MUCH AS YOU ALL." INTRO CONTINUES, "AFTER 34 YEARS WORKING FOR THE U.S. FOREIGN SERVICE, HILL RESIGNED AS AMBASSADOR TO ARGENTINA AND ASKED FOR HIS RETIREMENT AS WELL. REASON: DISAGREEMENT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S FOREIGN POLICY 'I ESPECIALLY DISSENT FROM HIS FOCUS ON THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN RIGHTS,' HE SAID."

FOLLOWING ARE SIGNIFICANT EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW. EXPLAINING THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS RESIGNATION, HILL SAID THAT HE TOLD PATRICIA DERIAN DURING HER VISIT TO BUENOS AIRES THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO CONTINUE AS U.S. AMBASSADOR TO ARGENTINA BECAUSE "I COULD NOT CARRY OUT A HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY THAT I CONSIDER ERRONEOUS AND LACKING SO MUCH UNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE ARGENTINE REALITY."

ASKED WHAT HIS POINTS OF DISAGREEMENT WITH CARTER'S STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS WERE, HILL ANSWERED THAT CARTER'S POLICY IS "AMBIGUOUS AND CONTRADICTIONARY, SINCE IT APPLIES ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SANCTIONS TO TRADITIONAL U.S. FRIENDS LIKE ARGENTINA, CHILE AND BRAZIL FOR PRESUMPTIVE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS BUT DOES NOT CONDEMN CUBA, NORTH VIETNAM OR OTHER TRADITIONAL ENEMIES... CARTER HAS RAISED THE HUMAN RIGHTS BANNER AS THE AXIOM OF HIS FOREIGN POLICY, AND THAT IS PRAISEWORTHY; BUT THAT IS NOT THE REASON WHY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE VOTED FOR HIM. THEY (THE ADMINISTRATION AND CARTER) WANT TO APPLY MORAL RULES AND IN THE LONG RUN END UP WINNING ENEMIES, AS IF THEY DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HUMAN RIGHTS IN COUNTRIES WITH NO URBAN GUERRILLAS AND THOSE WHERE THIS IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM, AS IS CLEARLY THE CASE WITH ARGENTINA."

ASKED WHY THE U.S. INSISTS ON THIS ATTITUDE TOWARD ARGENTINA, IN SPITE OF THE CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM EXPRESSED BY KNOWLEDGEABLE PEOPLE SUCH AS HIGH ARGENTINE OFFICIALS AND HIMSELF, HILL DECLARED "IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TURNS ITS EYES AND EARS TO THE PRESS, STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY LEFTIST SECTORS, INSTEAD OF TO PEOPLE WITH FIRST-HAND-KNOWLEDGE OF THE SITUATION LIKE HIMSELF." THIS TO HIM IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE. HILL CITES THE CASE OF OLGA TALAMANTE AS AN EXAMPLE, FOR HE CAN TESTIFY TO THE EFFECT THAT SHE WAS NOT MISTREATED WHILE IN JAIL IN ARGENTINA ON SUBVERSIVE CHARGES. "SHE WAS NOT

TORTURED OR MISTREATED DURING HER IMPRISONMENT. SHE HERSELF ADMITTED THAT WHEN SHE WAS QUESTIONED BY ARGENTINE NEWSMEN BEFORE BEING TAKEN FROM EZEIZA TO THE U.S. BUT ONCE SHE ARRIVED HERE (IN U.S.) SHE BEGAN TO SAY THE OPPOSITE, THAT SHE HAD BEEN SUBJECTED TO TORTURE, ABUSE, ETC... THE AMERICAN PRESS USED FALSE TESTIMONY BUT IGNORED A REPORT FROM A RESPONSIBLE AMBASSADOR, WHICH I CONSIDER MYSELF TO BE." ASKED IF ARGENTINES COULD EXPECT THE TRADITIONAL FIRESHIPSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES TO REMAIN UNCHANGED, HILL ANSWERED, "THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND THE U.S. HAS ALREADY CHANGED SINCE JANUARY 21, 1977. THERE WILL BE FURTHER COOLING OF RELATIONS IF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS ARE APPLIED. HOWEVER, IT IS TO BE EXPECTED THAT ONCE THE CONTROVERSY OVER HUMAN RIGHTS IS SOLVED, RELATIONS WILL RETURN TO NORMAL." WHEN ASKED ABOUT HIS SUCCESSOR AS AMBASSADOR TO ARGENTINA, HILL POINTED OUT THAT HE SUGGESTED TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT A CAREER DIPLOMAT INSTEAD OF A POLITICAL APPOINTEE, ADDING THAT SOMEONE LIKE MR. SHLAUDERMAN, PRESENTLY AMBASSADOR TO PERU, WOULD BE A GOOD SELECTION. ASKED EXPRESSLY ABOUT RAUL CASTRO, HILL REPLIED, "I DON'T KNOW. AT LEAST HIS POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARGENTINA DOESN'T SEEM TO BE MUCH IN ACCORD WITH CARTER'S..." CONCLUDING THE INTERVIEW, HILL STATED THAT "PERHAPS I'LL WRITE A SERIES OF LONG ARTICLES TRYING TO CHANGE THE IMAGE THAT THE AMERICAN PRESS HAS OF YOUR COUNTRY."

COPIES OF INTERVIEW BEING FORWARDED BY POUCH TO ARA/ECA.

CHAPLIN

MATE

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☐ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to
Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

UNCLASSIFIED

85D366
59-91-0190